

***Diaperis boleti* (L.) (Col.: Tenebrionidae) from a second
Huntingdonshire National Nature Reserve**

During a field meeting of the Huntingdonshire Fauna and Flora Society on 19 May 1996 at Woodwalton Fen I examined a clump of birch trees growing in the centre of this National Nature Reserve (grid reference TL2284). Several trees bore birch bracket fungi of *Piptoporus betulinus*. On one dead stem, on the northern edge of the clump, I noticed an old dry bracket fungus with large holes, 4-5mm diameter, bored into its stem. Breaking open the fungus, which was about 1.5mm up a two metre high dead stem, produced a single adult *Diaperis boleti* (L.). Bracket fungi on the other trees were promptly searched and another with similar sized holes was found half a metre above ground near the base of a multi-stemmed birch. This produced three more examples of *Diaperis* although one was a deformed teneral specimen. Other species of Coleoptera present in these fungi included two *Paromalus flavicornis* (Hbst.); one *Atheta fungi* (Gr.); four *Dacne bipustulata* (Thnb.); three *Orthoperus mundus* Matt.; one *Aridius bifasciatus* (Reitt.); about 30 *Cis bilamellatus* Wood; and five *Mycetophagus quadripustulatus* (L.).

The two old bracket fungi removed from the trees were brought home and placed in a plastic sandwich box together with the three mature specimens. The contents were not examined again until 18 July 1996 when I removed seven adult beetles to my collection. On 1 August the remains of the bracket fungi were removed and broken open. A total of 31 beetles were found, many still within pupal cells which formed discrete spheres approximately 12 mm in diameter. On the following day, 2 August 1996, 30 adult beetles were taken and released at three separate locations in Woodwalton Fen NNR; 16 at the original site, eight in an adjacent compartment, and six in the north-west of the Reserve in TL2285. At each site the beetles were either placed within holes bored into the flesh of the fungus, or the hymenium was eased away from the main body of the fungus and the beetles inserted between them. A bracket removed during the first visit in May had been left at the base of the tree. This was re-examined on 2 August and when two *D. boleti* emerged they and the fungus were replaced. When I finally cleaned out the semi-liquid contents of the box in which the fungus had been kept I found four more adult beetles together with scores of *Cis bilamellatus*.

Hyman and Parsons in their *Review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain* (1992) list the nine Counties from which *Diaperis boleti* has been recorded including the only post 1970 records for East Sussex, East Kent and Huntingdonshire. This last record refers to Holme Fen NNR, approximately four kilometres NNE of Woodwalton Fen, where several coleopterists collected specimens in 1985.— R. COLIN WELCH, The Mathom House, Hemington, nr. Oundle, Peterborough PE8 5QJ.